



Supervisor Ralph Buona's Ashburn District



NEWS FLASH

Dog Parks Now "Legal" in Loudoun!



An Example of a Dog Park in an HOA Community

As a self-professed dog lover, I am thrilled to announce that dog parks are finally allowed in Loudoun County! Since 2002, dog parks have not been a permitted zoning use anywhere in the county (except as an accessory use to a public park and in the PDR-TRC zoning district).

After hearing from many constituents and HOA leaders, I brought an item to the full board in 2013 to add the "Dog Park Zoning Amendment" to our strategic plan. This allowed staff to begin work on revising the ordinance. The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on October 21, 2014 and voted unanimously to approve the amendment. At the Board's Public Hearing last night, we also voted unanimously to approve the amendment and suspended the rules, thus enacting the ordinance change last night. "Dog Park" is now an allowed use in HOA-owned common open space within the PD-H Zoning Districts.

If an HOA wishes to build a dog park in their community (in their HOA-owned common open space), they would simply need to pull a zoning permit. If any buildings are proposed or if any changes to parking areas will be undertaken as part of a dog park project, a site plan will be required.

I will be communicating this to all of the HOA presidents in the Ashburn District as well.

Please see below for the background of this item from the Staff Report. The full Staff Report can be viewed here: <http://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/109480>

BACKGROUND:

The use "Dog Park" was first established as a specific use under the Zoning Ordinance with the approval of ZOAM-2002-0001, effective November 4, 2002. The focus of ZOAM-2002-0001 was to provide a comprehensive rewrite of the regulations for the Planned Development-Transit Related Center (PD-TRC) Zoning District. As part of ZOAM-2002-0001, "Dog Park" was added as a Special Exception Use in the PD-TRC Zoning District and a definition of "Dog Park" was added to Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance, which reads as follows:

Dog Park: A park that provides a variety of recreational amenities for dogs and persons that may include benches, parking, restrooms, and water fountains. If dogs are to be unleashed, the area must be fenced.

The addition of "Dog Park" as a specific use to the Zoning Ordinance and its inclusion only in the PD-TRC Zoning District resulted in "Dog Park" not being allowed as a Permitted Use or Special Exception Use in any other Zoning District. Staff and the Board of Supervisors have heard from residents expressing their desire to establish a "Dog Park" on Homeowner's Association ("HOA") common areas in their communities. The County has issued several Zoning Determinations stating that a "Dog Park" is not a Permitted Use or Special Exception Use in the various Zoning Districts where such communities are located. The County does permit a "Dog Park" as an accessory use to a public park.

At its May 15, 2013 Business Meeting, Supervisor Buona brought forward a motion that the Board unanimously approved a motion to "amend its Strategic Plan by adding a zoning ordinance amendment allowing private dog parks within the PD-H zoning district and direct staff to add this item to the work plan and timeline for ongoing initiatives as staff resources become available upon completion of current initiatives of the Board." At its June 4, 2014 Business Meeting, the Board voted 8-0-1 (Higgins absent) to direct staff to continue forward to complete the existing initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan and to then take up dog parks as a priority.

At its July 16, 2014 Business Meeting, the Board unanimously approved a motion adopting the Resolution of Intent to amend the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance to permit "Dog Park" in the HOA owned common open space in the Planned Development-Housing Zoning District.

Mark Your Calendars - Loudoun Symphony:

The next concert of the Loudoun Symphony will be an "All Mozart" event on Saturday, 31 January at 7:30 p.m. in the Music Hall of The Community Church off Route 7 in Ashburn. The concert will feature the orchestra playing the popular Overture to the opera Don

Giovanni. Also on the program will be an oboe concerto with guest soloist Dagmar Fatma, and Mozart's delightful Symphony #39. Come enjoy an evening brimming with the music of one of the all-time greats.

To order tickets or for more information please go to www.loudounsymphony.org

I wish you and yours a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season. My office will be open during the holiday season, so do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions regarding the Ashburn District.

Ralph.Buona@loudoun.gov | www.Loudoun.gov/Ashburn
MSC #01 1 Harrison Street, S.E., 5th Floor Leesburg, VA 20175
Dorri O'Brien, Legislative Aide | 703-777-0205 | Dorri.OBrien@loudoun.gov